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ABSTRACT

All evidence from all sources--the literature, survey of practitioners and educators, selected educational programs, and the views of abstractors of data for computerized information retrieval--points to the body of public relations knowledge as consisting of all knowledge as it applies to resolving public relations problems and goals. What distinguishes the body of public relations knowledge from other knowledge is its application in achieving public relations goals. To examine this field in further depth, a study collected information from as many different sources and perspectives as possible to reach a consensus regarding the body of public relations knowledge including: (1) input from selected senior practitioners and educators; (2) analysis of the library holdings of public relations firms and corporate relations departments; (3) examination of topics covered in public relations bibliographies; and (4) examination of the content of selected public relations periodicals. Findings show that when communication was written about and discussed, it was generally in terms of managing information and utilizing communication technology and that there is a need for knowledge of marketing, finance, and economics, especially as resources become more limited and competition for the corporate dollar intensifies. Findings also suggest that the body of public relations knowledge must be applicable to a wide variety of situations as they arise. (MS)

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